

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 FAA-00 L-03

SS-15 NSC-05 LAB-04 SIL-01 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02

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R 022142Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4640

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY ROME

FAA BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, EIND, FR, US

SUBJ: CIVAIR: MERCURE 200 PROJECT

REF: PARIS 25381 AND PREVIOUS

1. (BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED) IN TOULOUSE ON SEPTEMBER 1, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE THREE TRADE UNIONS--CGC, CFDT AND FORCE OUVRIERE--COMPRISING THE MAJORITY OF WORKER REPRESENTATION ON THE WORKS COUNCIL (COMITE D'ENTREPRISE) AT SNIAS HELD A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE AT WHICH THEY CAME OUT STRONGLY AGAINST THE MERCURE 200 PROJECT. (AS REPORTED IN PARIS 24056, THE CGT--IN THE MINORITY ON THE SNIAS
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WORKS COUNCIL--AND FORCE OUVRIERE WERE ALREADY ON

RECORD AS QUESTIONING THE SOUNDNESS OF THE PROJECT.) THE UNIONS DOUBTED THE WISDOM OF THE MERCURE 200'S CONCEPTION, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THE MERCURE 100 OF WHICH THE NEW AIRCRAFT WOULD BE A DERIVATIVE, AND THEY ALSO EXPRESSED FEAR THAT THE NEW PROJECT COULD RESULT IN A SLOWDOWN OF PRODUCTION OF THE AIRBUS, WHICH IS CURRENTLY ASSEMBLED AT THE SNIAS PLANT IN TOULOUSE. US PARTICIPATION (DOUGLAS) IN THE MERCURE 200 PROJECT WAS STILL AN OBJECT OF CRITICISM, BUT THE THRUST IS DIFFERENT; THE REPS OF THE THREE UNIONS NOW CONTEND THAT THE DOUGLAS SHARE IN THE MERCURE 200 PROJECT IS TOO SMALL AND WILL NOT COMMIT DOUGLAS SUFFICIENTLY TO THE SUCCESS OF THE MERCURE 200. THE UNION REPS ALSO ASKED TO BE INFORMED ON THE DECISION TO BE TAKEN FOR AIR FRANCE FLEET RENEWAL AND SAID THAT PURCHASE OF DC-9'S OR 737'S AS CARAVELLE REPLACEMENTS BY AIR FRANCE COULD HAVE SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS FOR THE FRENCH AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY. IN THEIR VIEW THE AIR FRANCE CARAVELLES SHOULD BE REPLACED BY THE B2 VERSION OF THE AIRBUS (CAPACITY 220 PASSENGERS). (COMMENT: CAPACITY OF EVEN THE B2 VERSION OF AIRBUS WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE FAR IN EXCESS OF WHAT AIR FRANCE NEEDS AND WANTS IN REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT FOR CARAVELLES.) IN CONCLUSION, THE REPS OF THE THREE UNIONS SAID THAT A NEW MEDIUM-RANGE AIRCRAFT SHOULD BE DESIGNED BY SNIAS AND BE CONSTRUCTED BY A PREDOMINANTLY EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM DRAWING ON COMPANIES IN OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY.

2. THE CFDT SECTION AT SNIAS HAS ALSO RELEASED A COMMUNIQUE, ACCORDING TO LE MONDE, ANNOUNCING THAT ENGINEERS ON THE SNIAS DESIGN STAFF HAVE RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS TO TRANSMIT ALL PLANS ON THE AIRBUS DESIGN TO MCDONNELL DOUGLAS. THE COMMUNIQUE SAYS THAT MAKING THIS INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO DOUGLAS WILL NOW ENABLE THE US CONSTRUCTOR EFFECTIVELY TO NEUTRALIZE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AIRBUS. THE

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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COMMUNIQUE CONCLUDES BY ALLEGING THAT THIS IS
FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THE GOF'S POLICY OF "DISMANTLING"
THE FRENCH AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY, WHICH CAN ONLY HAVE
"DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES" FOR SNIAS WORKERS.
(END UNCLASSIFIED)

3. (BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)--WE UNDERSTAND
FROM A SNIAS SOURCE (AS WELL AS FROM AIR FRANCE)
THAT IN A WEEK OR SO A SNIAS-DASSAULT TEAM IS TO
GO TO THE US TO DISCUSS AIRBUS WITH MCDONNELL DOUGLAS.
(IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT LAST YEAR THE GOF SOUGHT
TO GET DOUGLAS TO AGREE TO MARKET THE AIRBUS IN THE
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US, BUT DOUGLAS REFUSED.) AIR FRANCE TELLS US THAT
THE PURPOSE OF THE UPCOMING TALKS IS TO EXPLORE THE

POSSIBILITY OF COMBINING THE AIRBUS AND DC-10
DESIGNS. (AIRBUS AND DC-10 ALREADY HAVE A COMMON
NACELLE, BUILT BY ROHR CORP.) AIR FRANCE REP
EXPRESSED TO US OPINION THIS WOULD BE EMPTY EXERCISE,
NOT JUST BECAUSE OF DIFFERENT FEATURES IN AIRFRAME
DESIGN OF THE TWO AIRCRAFT BUT ALSO AND ESPECIALLY
BECAUSE OF DIFFERENCES IN SYSTEMS DESIGN. (WE WONDER
WHETHER DCX-200 MIGHT NOT BE FOCUS OF THE TALKS,
HOWEVER, JUST AS BOEING HAD EARLIER TRIED TO INTEREST
FRENCH IN JOINING THEIR 7X7 PROJECT.)
RUSH

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